

Nov. 28, 1944

Hi darling,

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Last night I saw my first USO show -- Roscoe Yates -- who turned out to be quite a clown, with a couple of buxom luscious little American girls -- just what the G.I.'s lap up. Me too. I nearly saw one at the 30th F.H. but two cases came in just before it was to start. Otherwise, they haven't quite gotten up to us.

Ernie and I have found an excellent pin-ball machine in a nearby stube, - two teams of little men who kick a ball into opposing goals, a la soccer. Very exciting, and good for a couple of hours of amusement along with a few beers. Thus speeds the war!

Today is cold and sleeting. The sting of winter is in the air. For the lads in the line, there are few comforts indeed, and the mines & shells are there, as always. We sit inside our nice warm tent and listen to the radio, and do nothing.

I don't seem to have any stories to tell you today. Most of my stories are pretty much the same, and you've had enough of those. I don't believe I ever wrote you much about our experiences in the channel or on the beach, but I think probably that was pretty well covered in the letter I wrote Gene which finally came to you (through channels). The essential high-lights were these. After our two companion ships hit mines, we lay motionless for an hour until picked up and guided by MTB's and taken to the British beach at Caen. There we lay at anchor the night of D1, and an exciting night it was, with Jerry over intermittently, and ack-ack & machine gun fire lighting the night; streams of it, from ground, and from every ship. A whine and drone, then a beginning rattle of fire, swelling to a roaring crescendo until the whole harbor would be belching hot lead, a ton a second. Then sudden quiet and darkness again.

The next day, about seven o'clock we weighed anchor, and headed for our proper beach at the extreme opposite end of the operation. Thus we sailed, a mile or two, off shore, the entire length of the landing operation! The thousands on thousands of boats of all size - transports to dories; 6 T's to battle wagons; guns blazing, - darting here and there; what a spectacle! We sat on deck, grand-stand seats to the greatest spectacle on earth. We found our site around 3:30 P.M. At 4 we disembarked into a LSt, from thence to an LCVP, and from thence, about 9:30 P.M. to 4½ feet of nice, cold water. Poor Tony! Being the youngest Lieutenant he had to carry the 10-in-1 rations. But under his duffle bag, bed roll and his musette bag he looked like a mouse carrying a laundry bag. He went in over his head, so Lew & I had to grab him by a shoulder each and lug him the first 30 yards, or he'd have drowned sure. On the beach, all was confusion. Nobody had ever heard of us! But, "Get the hell off the beach, anyway", we we spread out over a nice sandy

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dune, covered with short, tough clumps of grass. Here, with a 50¢ hatchet and our helmets we dug, what we called "fox-holes", about a foot deep. They didn't look very impressive, so we piled a lot of boxes around them which were lying around there. It was dark of course, everybody was wet & cold, but excited. It was hard digging with helmets (they never bother to give Medics any equipment), but after that first '88 screamed in over our heads and went wham! about 60 yards down the beach, you should have seen the dirt fly! Later, when Jerry's whine turned into the roar of a dive, and tracers started biting the sand, and the sudden deafening uproar of the anti-aircraft guns cleft the night, we began to feel Jerry was taking altogether too personal an interest in us! But, it was a great colorful exciting show, and we didn't yet know what it was all about. We were fat, dumb and happy! But next morning, when we rose to build fires to try & dry out, and found that the boxes we'd used in the night to "protect" our fox-holes, were full of 105 mm. ammunition, and we saw the dead and the wounded, and the smoking mangled wrecks of machines and boats, the terrible realities began to soak in, and each said a little prayer in his heart that the Lord should see fit to guard, along with drunks and little children, ignorant docs.

Soon we were too busy to remember, or to worry.

Enuf for now - amphibious operations for sheer violence and confusion, dwarf all others.

Lots of love, sweet.

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